

Yea, though thou do demand a Prisoner
The Noblest tane.

Imo. I humbly thanke your Highnesse.

Luc. I do not bid thee begge my life, good Lad,
And yet I know thou wilt.

Imo. No, no, alacke,

There's other worke in hand: I see a thing
Bitter to me, as death: your life, good Master,
Must shuffle for it selfe.

Luc. The Boy disdaines me,
He leaues me, scornes me: briefly dye their ioyes,
That place them on the truth of Gyrls, and Boyes.
Why stands he so perplext?

Cym. What would'st thou Boy?

I loue thee more, and more: thinke more and more
What's best to aske. Know'st him thou look'st on? speak
Wilt haue him liue? Is he thy Kin? thy Friend?

Imo. He is a Roman, no more kin to me,
Then I to your Highnesse, who being born your vassalle
Am something nearer.

Cym. Wherefore ey'st him so?

Imo. He tell you (Sir) in priuate, if you please
To giue me hearing.

Cym. I, with all my heart,
And lend my best attention. What's thy name?

Imo. Fidele Sir.

Cym. Thou'rt my good youth: my Page
He be thy Master: walke with me: speake freely.

Bel. Is not this Boy reuiu'd from death?

Arui. One Sand another
Not more resembles that sweet Rosie Lad:
Who dyed, and was Fidele: what thinke you?

Gui. The same dead thing aliue.

Bel. Peace, peace, see further: he eyes vs not, forbear
Creatures may be alike: were't he, I am sure
He would haue spoke to vs.

Gui. But we see him dead.

Bel. Be silent: let's see further.

Pisa. It is my Mistis:
Since she is liuing, let the time run on,
To good, or bad.

Cym. Come, stand thou by our side,
Make thy demand aloud. Sir, step you forth,
Giue answer to this Boy, and do it freely,
Or by our Greatnesse, and the grace of it
(Which is our Honor) bitter torture shall
Winnow the truth from falshood. One speake to him.

Imo. My boone is, that this Gentleman may render
Of whom he had this Ring.

Post. What's that to him?

Cym. That Diamond vpon your Finger, say
How came it yours?

Iach. Thou'lt torture me to leaue vnspoken, that
Which to be spoke, would torture thee.

Cym. How? me?

Iach. I am glad to be constrain'd to vtter that
Which torments me to conceale. By Villany
I got this Ring: 'twas *Leonatus* Jewell,
Whom thou did'st banish: and which more may greeue
As it doth me: a Nobler Sir, ne're liu'd (thee,
'Twixt sky and ground. Wilt thou heare more my Lord?

Cym. All that belongs to this.

Iach. That Paragon, thy daughter,
For whom my heart drops blood, and my false spirits
Quaile to remember. Giue me leaue, I faint.

Cym. My Daughter? what of hir? Renew thy strength

I had rather thou should'st liue, while Nature will,
Then dye ere I heare more: striue man, and speake.

Iach. Vpon a time, vnhappy was the clocke
That strooke the houre: it was in Rome, accurst
The Mansion where: 'twas at a Feast, oh would
Our Viands had bin poyson'd (or at least
Those which I heau'd to head:) the good *Posthumus*,
(What should I say? he was too good to be
Where ill men were, and was the best of all
Among'st the rar'st of good ones) sitting sadly,
Hearing vs praise our Loues of Italy
For Beauty, that made barren the swell'd boast
Of him that best could speake: for Feature, laming
The Shrine of *Venus*, or straight-pight *Athena*,
Postures, beyond breefe Nature. For Condition,
A shop of all the qualities, that man
Loues woman for, besides that hooke of Wiuing,
Fairenesse, which strikes the eye.

Cym. I stand on fire. Come to the matter.

Iach. All too soone I shall,

Vnlesse thou would'st greeue quickly. This *Posthumus*,
Most like a Noble Lord, in loue, and one
That had a Royall Louer, tooke his hint,
And (not dispraising whom we prais'd, therein
He was as calme as vertue) he began
His Mistis picture, which, by his tongue, being made,
And then a minde put in't, either our bragges
Were crack'd of Kitchen-Trulles, or his description
Prou'd vs vnspaking forties.

Cym. Nay, nay, to'th' purpose.

Iach. Your daughters Chastity, (there it begins)

He spake of her, as *Diana* had hot dreames,
And she alone, were cold: Whereat, I wretch
Made scruple of his praise, and wager'd with him
Peeces of Gold, 'gainst this, which then he wore
Vpon his honour'd finger) to attaine
In suite the place of's bed, and winne this Ring
By hers, and mine Adultery: he (true Knight)
No lesler of her Honour confident
Then I did truly finde her, stakes this Ring,
And would so, had it bene a Carbuncle
Of Phœbus Wheele; and might so safely, had it
Bin all the worth of's Carre. Away to Britaine
Poste I in this designe: Well may you (Sir)
Remember me at Court, where I was taught
Of your chaste Daughter, the wide difference
'Twixt Amorous, and Villanous. Being thus quenched
Of hope, not longing; mine Italian braine,
Gan in your duller Britaine operate
Most vildely: for my vantage excellent.
And to be breefe, my practise so preuayl'd
That I return'd with simular prooffe enough,
To make the Noble *Leonatus* mad,
By wounding his beleefe in her Renowne,
With Tokens thus, and thus: auerring notes
Of Chamber-hanging, Pictures, this her Bracelet
(Oh cunning how I got) nay some markes
Of secret on her person, that he could not
But thinke her bond of Chastity quite crack'd,
I hauing tane the forfeit. Whereupon,
Me thinkes I see him now.

Post. I so thou do'st,
Italian Fiend. Aye me, most credulous Foole,
Egregious murderer, Theefe, any thing
That's due to all the Villaines past, in being
To come. Oh giue me Cord, or knife, or poyson,

Some

Some vpright Iusticer. Thou King, send out
For Torturers ingenious: it is I

That all th'abhorred things o'th'earth amend
By being worse then they. I am *Posthumus*,
That kill'd thy Daughter: Villain-like, I lye,
That caus'd a lesler villaine then my selfe,
A sacrilegious Theefe to doo't. The Temple
Of Vertue was she; yea, and she her selfe.
Spit, and throw stones, cast myre vpon me, set
The dogges o'th' street to bay me: euery villaine
Be call'd *Posthumus Leonatus*, and
Be villany lesse then 'twas. Oh *Imogen*!
My Queene, my life, my wife: oh *Imogen*,
Imogen, *Imogen*.

Imo. Peace my Lord, heare, heare.

Post. Shall's haue a play of this?

Thou scornfull Page, there lye thy part.

Pisa. Oh Gentlemen, helpe,

Mine and your Mistis: Oh my Lord *Posthumus*,
You ne're kill'd *Imogen* till now: helpe, helpe,
Mine honour'd Lady.

Cym. Does the world go round?

Post. How comes these staggers on mee?

Pisa. Wake my Mistis.

Cym. If this be so, the Gods do meane to strike me

To death, with mortall toy.

Pisa. How fares my Mistis?

Imo. Oh get thee from my sight,

Thou gau'st me poyson: dangerous Fellow hence,
Breath not where Princes are.

Cym. The tune of *Imogen*.

Pisa. Lady, the Gods throw stones of sulphur on me, if
That box I gaue you, was not thought by mee
A precious thing, I had it from the Queene.

Cym. New matter still.

Imo. It poyson'd me.

Corn. Oh Gods!

I left out one thing which the Queene confest,
Which must approue thee honest. If *Pasanio*
Haue (said she) giuen his Mistis that Confection
Which I gaue him for Cordiall, she is seru'd,
As I would serue a Rat.

Cym. What's this, *Cornelius*?

Corn. The Queene (Sir) very oft importun'd me
To temper poysons for her, still pretending
The satisfaction of her knowledge, onely
In killing Creatures wilde, as Cats and Dogges
Of no esteeme. I dreading, that her purpose
Was of more danger, did compound for her
A certaine stuffe, which being tane, would cease
The present powre of life, but in short time,
All Offices of Nature, should againe
Do their due Functions. Haue you tane of it?

Imo. Most like I did, for I was dead.

Bel. My Boyes, there was our error.

Gui. This is sure Fidele.

Imo. Why did you throw your wedded Lady fro you?

Thinke that you are vpon a Rocke, and now
Throw me againe.

Post. Hang there like fruit, my soule,
Till the Tree dye.

Cym. How now, my Flesh? my Childe?
What, mak'st thou me a dullard in this Act?
Wilt thou not speake to me?

Imo. Your blessing, Sir.

Bel. Though you did loue this youth, I blame ye not,

You had a motive for't.

Cym. My teares that fall
Proue holy-water on thee; *Imogen*,
Thy Mothers dead.

Imo. I am sorry for't, my Lord.

Cym. Oh, she was naught; and long of her it was
That we meet heere so strangely: but her Sonne
Is gone, we know not how, nor where.

Pisa. My Lord,

Now feare is from me, Ile speake troth. Lord *Cloten*
Vpon my Ladies missing, came to me
With his Sword drawne, foam'd at the mouth, and swore
If I discouer'd not which way she was gone,
It was my instant death. By accident,
I had a feigned Letter of my Masters
Then in my pocket, which directed him
To seeke her on the Mountaines neere to Milford,
Where in a frenzie, in my Masters Garments
(Which he inforc'd from me) away he postes
With vnchaste purpose, and with oath to violate
My Ladies honor, what became of him,
I further know not.

Gui. Let me end the Story: I slew him there.

Cym. Marry, the Gods forefend.

I would not thy good deeds, should from my lips
Plucke a hard sentence: Prythee valiant youth
Deny't againe.

Gui. I haue spoke it, and I did it.

Cym. He was a Prince.

Gui. A most inciuill one. The wrongs he did mee
Were nothing Prince-like; for he did prouoke me
With Language that would make me spurne the Sea,
If it could so roare to me. I cut off's head,
And am right glad he is not standing heere
To tell this tale of mine.

Cym. I am sorrow for thee:

By thine owne tongue thou art condemn'd, and must
Endure our Law: Thou'rt dead.

Imo. That headlesse man I thought had bin my Lord

Cym. Binde the Offender,

And take him from our presence.

Bel. Stay, Sir King.

This man is better then the man he slew,
As well defended as thy selfe, and hath
More of thee merited, then a Band of *Clotens*
Had euer scarce for. Let his Armes alone,
They were not borne for bondage.

Cym. Why old Soldier:
Wilt thou vndoo the worth thou art vnpayd for
By tasting of our wrath? How of descent
As good as we?

Arui. In that he spake too farre.

Cym. And thou shalt dye for't.

Bel. We will dye all three,

But I will proue that two one's are as good
As I haue giuen out him. My Sonnes, I must
For mine owne part, vnfold a dangerous speech,
Though haply well for you.

Arui. Your danger's ours.

Guid. And our good his.

Bel. Haue at it then, by leaue
Thou hadd'st (great King) a Subject, who
Was call'd *Belarius*.

Cym. What of him? He is a banish'd Traitor.

Bel. He it is, that hath
Assum'd this age: indeed a banish'd man,